ADVICE TO THE READERS OF THE Common-Prayer, And to the PEOPLE Attending the ſame.

With a PREFACE concerning DIVINE WORSHIP.

Humbly offered to Conſideration, for promoting the greater Decency and Solemnity in performing the Offices of Gods PUBLICK WORSHIP, Adminiſtred according to the Order Eſtabliſhed by Law amongſt us.

By a well-meaning (though unlearned) Layick *of the* CHURCH *of* ENGLAND.

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UMI

TO THE READER.

There is no Christian that prays in the words which his Lord hath taught him, but doth impleitely profess his desire that these Papers may be read and considered: For the first thing he prays for, is the hallowing Gods Name; *which is*, that God will give his Grace to us, and all people, that we may worship him as we ought to do, *as our Catechism hath taught us. Now the design hereof being onely to give assistance to the worshipping God as we ought, he that desires the doing of that, must also the considering of this. For how meanly soever the thing be done, it cannot but occasion some thoughts in mens minds, and some discourse in company on this Subject; whereby it is very probable many things that were amiss before, may be amended, and something found out for the bettering of this Service, which would not have otherwise been thought on: And if it do but this, I have my end. I do not impose my Dictates on any, but offer things to Consideration with all humility; acknowledging, that both my want of Learning, Time, Health, and due Composure, make me unfit for writing for publick view; but my fervent desire to see things ordered in the best manner in* this Service, *which I have found so comfortable to my self, and that it may be more esteemed and frequented by others, hath perswaded this Essay, which I hope will offend none. If any should blame my boldness in medling with those of the Ministry, my excuse must be, in the observation of an Ingenious Gentleman,* That even the Lamps of the Sanctuary may need Snuffers to make them burn the clearer. *I know he saith, they ought to be of Gold; and I wish mine were better metal: But I hope the purity of my Intention will make amends for the meanness of my Style and Expression, and procure a kind acceptance with that sacred Tribe. I recommend all to Gods Blessing, and a candid interpretation.*

To fill up this Page.

ADVERTISEMENT.

☞ *At St.* Mary Woolnoth, (*the Church adjoyning to the Post-house in* Lumbard-Street) *Prayers are read every Morning exactly at Eleven a Clock.*

I Have thought fit to give publick notice of this, for these Reasons following.

First, Because this being added to the daily Prayers at St. *Christophers*, make a perfect accommodation for all persons that desire Morning and Evening to attend Gods Worship: Many who could not be so early as six in the Morning at St. *Christophers*, may attend here at a later hour.

2. I hope there may be many such among the Multitudes that are drawn this way by the Exchange or the Posthouse, who may be more willing to spend half an hour there in the Service of God, than at a Coffee-house in idle and impertinent talk; and rather appoint to meet one another at Church, than in a worse place.

3. There may be some who would be so well pleased to see this Service well attended, as to settle a Maintainance for the perpetuating thereof; without which it may in time cease.

4. It is hoped, all things may be so well performed in a place where the most Intelligent of the Nation frequent, as to recommend the Order of our Church to all that are occasionally present; and so have a good influence on the whole City and Kingdom.

5. I am apt to think, that a hearty love to the Order of our Church, would be an effectual Antidote, (as against *Popery* and *Fanaticism*, so) against factious *Sidings* on account of State-affairs; because all opposition to the Civil Powers, necessitates a Conjunction with such as are Enemies to the Common-Prayers, and so tends to the destruction of this good Order; which a man that truly loves it would not hazard, for small inconveniencies in the former case.

6. I am more certain, that if men were more concerned for the Worship and Service of the supream Lord of all things, and Merchants would spend half an hour at Church before they go to the Exchange, we should find a great increase of Trade, and our Affairs would thrive the better.

Being conscious that so much good is intended, I shall not be concerned though, by some, this action be blamed.

A PREFACE

Concerning Divine Worship.

THe Worship of God *is a thing much talked of (and that with great reverence) by many who have not (as I think) such apprehensions of it as they ought. And on the other hand, of some it is as much slighted, as if there were something of* Fanaticism *in all pretences to* Devotion. *My design therefore in this Preface shall be, to beget* right thoughts *about it, and a* due esteem *thereof; as I have in what follows endeavoured to direct a* right behaviour *therein.*

If men would consider the thing, it would not be difficult to understand what the true notion of Divine Worship *is: Every man knows what it is to* give Worship *in the common sence of that word* (viz.) *That it is to signifie our Respects to persons above us, by reverent actions suted unto their dignity: And so it must principally signifie when it is applied unto God,* The expression of the greatest dread and reverence towards his Glorious and Tremendous Deity, by the most humble postures of Adoration. *This hath been the sense of all Mankind concerning this matter, and this is the sence of the holy Scriptures; and this all the Christian-world agreed in, until the corruptions and cruelties of the Church of* Rome, *made those that justly opposed her in many things, to forsake others, without any other reason, but the hatred of being like her, who had been so cruel towards them. And among these, I reckon this to be the chief; That they not onely left off the daily Offices of Gods publick Worship, but also that ancient Order for the performance thereof on the Lords day, which was most accommodate unto the conjunction of these actions of adoration; by which means, bowing the Head, and Body, and Knees, &c. which have in them the principal sence of that word* Worship, *have become almost quite out of use among them.*

I cannot imagine for my own part any other reason why these solemn actions should become so wholly disused; for I cannot believe that any who are acquainted with what is written of the former or present Customs of the world, can be ignorant what the usage thereof hath ever been, and still is, in worshipping whatever they called God: nor did I ever hear it proved, that their common sense did herein deceive them. It seems to me also, that

it is impossible for any that read the Scripture, to be ignorant, that when it speaks of any person or Assembly, that they Worshipped the Lord, *it means principally, they bowed their Heads before him, in acknowledgment of his Deity, or in a sense of Gratitude for his Mercies; nor that these two words,* Bowed *and* Worshipped, *are almost every where in Scripture joyned together. And those that have read Ecclesiastical Histories, or conversed with any of other Churches that never were of the Popish Communion, will find, that it is not the Papists onely, among Christians, that abound in these solemn acts of Adoration, but that they ever were, and still are used by all Christians (and by some as much, if not more than by them) except onely those whom I speak of, who have forsaken them on the account aforesaid.*

Certainly there is some reason upon which this common Consent is grounded, and for which this expression hath ever been made, by good men, of the Worship and Honour they desire to give to Almighty God; and hath ever been accepted and approved of him, and therefore ought not to be forsaken and disused of us. And indeed, the very general custom and usage of the World, and of the Church, hath so much of reason in it self, that we should have evident Reason to prove the evil or great inconvenience of what is recommended thereby, before we contradict the same. We are commanded to Give no offence to the Jew, nor Greek, nor Church of God: *and it seems to me, by forsaking these solemn acts of Adoration, we offend them all. And I verily believe, there is nothing doth more confirm the Papists in their opinion of the goodness of their own Religion, and make them think ill of ours, than the observation of the decency of these solemn actions which are so frequently used in their publick Service, and that ours scarce look like the Worship of God, where they are wholly omitted; as they are in some Protestant Churches, and in all Nonconformists Meetings; and too much in our Parochial Assemblies also.*

But it is not onely the avoiding offence that should recommend the same, but many great reasons. 1. *There is nothing more effectual to impress on the mind a sense of Gods presence, than this solemn action of Bowing before him. It is impossible a man can use an Action, but he must think there is some one present to whom it is performed; and where men have not a true belief of Gods presence, and are conscious unto themselves of that defect, it will seem so unreasonable and foolish to perform such acts of Adoration, that they will be hardly perswaded thereunto. And for this reason, when the world became so carnaliz'd by indulging their bruitish part, that they could scarce have an apprehension of* invisible things, *but by the help of something that was the Object of their Senses, they invented* Images *to represent the invisible Powers they worshipped; and fancied, that by their Incantations and Charms, their Gods were drawn to inhabit these Images, by which means*

means they found they could more freely perform those acts of Adoration. But the onely living and true God hath utterly forbidden any such representations of himself, as a dishonour to the infinite Glory, and spirituality of his nature; but yet requires this Worship from us, in acknowledgment that he is every where present, but especially in the Assemblies that meet to do him honour and service; and that he onely is to be feared and had in reverence of all that are about him: *and if we would perform them as we ought, we should find great help thereby, against the weakness of our Faith, the dulness of our spiritual sense; and that it would beget in us such an habitual apprehension of Gods spiritual invisible presence, that it would be as a new nature, or principle of spiritual and holy life in all other things: I say, if we perform it as we ought; because I would have none think that I impute a Magical force to this action, as if all that perform it, on what account soever, should become inspired with such an habitual sense of God and his universal presence: For I know, that where this is in repute, men may be very observant thereof for carnal ends, and be inwardly Atheistical, and outwardly Profane still; but if it be designedly done, to signifie our belief of Gods presence, and our awful sense of his infinite Glory and Greatness, it hath a morally natural tendency to work such a habit of spiritual sensibility in this matter, that by the efficacie of the same, we shall be continually kept in the fear of offending God, and excited to all holy and vertuous actions that are pleasing to him.*

Besides, it prepares and disposes our minds to the performance of all the Offices of Divine Worship, whereby we explicate the signification of such acts of Adoration: and therefore it hath been used to be done at our first coming into the Church, that we may remember that we are chiefly to intend in all we do there, the Worship and Honour of Almighty God. *The want of this consideration, is a Cause of great mischiefs in the Church: Men have learnt to think that all the Ministries of Religion are intended to work on their Affections and Passions, and to gratifie a religious Fancy; and so they judge they are best ordered, when they serve most effectually to that end: and upon this account it is, that they condemn the* Common-Prayer *as a dead Form, and cry up the* Extempore *way, as the onely acceptable mode of Serving God. And while they thus judge, they are subject to be drawn into Schism and Errour by every subtile Seducer that can handle the instrument of his Tongue well, and affect their minds with some devout Passions. For so long as they think* That *way of Religion best which most affects them, (and novelty having a great force in that matter; and all men that design to serve their Interests by making Disciples being apt to bend their minds most strenuously to study to speak to mens passions) men can never be fix'd in any way of Religion. But if they were once perswaded that those publick Administrations of divine Offices were*

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best, which ſerved moſt fitly to the Worſhip and Adoration of the Deity, and were moſt advantageous for the conjunction of theſe acts of divine Adoration which I here ſpeak of, it would be hard for them to find any better than ours is.

For the better underſtanding of the foregoing Paragraph, I muſt obſerve, 1. That, as the Worſhip we perform to God, by humbly bowing down in our approach to his glorious Majeſty, doth declare our obligation unto all that we perform in the following Offices of our Publick Service: ſo thoſe Offices do contain the explication of the Worſhip which thereby we give to the Almighty. For ſince we declare by that action, that we worſhip him as the only true God, we oblige our ſelves to perform that ſervice unto him which Deity makes his due: and this we do when we give him thanks for the great benefits we have received at his hands, and ſet forth his moſt worthy praiſe; when we attend diligently to his holy Word, and ſeek at his hands things requiſite and neceſſary for Body and Soul: for we do declare, that by worſhipping God, we do, acknowledge him to be the Fountain of our Being, and of all the benefits whereof, thereby, we become poſſeſſed, and to be the free and gracious donor thereof: And that he is moſt worthy of all the Praiſe and Glory that we can give him, by reaſon of the infinite perfections of his Nature, and his mighty and wonderful Works: That he is infinite Wiſdom and Truth, and to be believed in all that he reveals to us; and our only ſupream Law-giver, and to be obey'd in all that he commands us: That he is our Soveraign Lord, and our weal or woe doth wholly depend on his Favour or Diſpleaſure; and that no arts or labours of our own can ſecure us againſt miſery, or inſtate us in true felicity internal or external, preſent or future, but by vertue of his bleſſing. And all this, and much more, is contained in acknowledging him to be God; which we do, by bowing down before him in the place of his Publick Worſhip.

2. Since the chief end of our Publick Service is the moſt explicite worſhipping God, by acknowledging thoſe things which Deity doth imply; It is very meet that we joyn this act of Adoration with our Prayers and Praiſes, in fit places; as, at the mention of Gods glorious Titles and Attributes, in the beginnings of the Collects; and when we implore his gracious acceptance for the merits of our bleſſed Saviour, at the Concluſion: and there are many places in the Te Deum, and in the other Hymns and Pſalms, where this action is very fit, both to expreſs our ſenſe of Gods preſence, and our reverence towards him, and our belief that he ſees us, and hears all we ſpeak to him; and to keep our Devotion in life and ſtrength, and aſſiſt it in each other. I find in many places of Scripture, where the manner of the ſolemn approaches of the people unto God is deſcribed, that they did bow their heads and worſhip, in conjunction with their Praiſes and Prayers: And it ſeems to me, that there is ſuch a natural decency in the thing, that all unpre-

unprejudiced perſons muſt approve it. Sure I am, that the devout behaviour of ſuch as I have known to be truely pious men in this kind, hath had a great influence on me, and I may think it will have the like on others.

3. *That it ſeems to me, that the intention of mind which is required to the ſpeaking in any good Sence and Method in the* Extempore-*way of Prayer, is a great hindrance to the due uſe of ſuch acts of Worſhip in the ſpeaker; and the neceſſary attention to what is ſpoken, and the inward diſcourſe of Reaſon, whether it be fit for us to joyn with the Miniſter therein, or not, is a great hindrance to ſuch Devotion in the hearers.*

4. *That the Brief and Comprehenſive Prayers into which the general Office of* Prayer *in our Way is divided, ſeems much better in this reſpect, than if the ſeveral matters whereof they conſiſt were compoſed into one long continued Prayer.*

5. *That it would be very convenient that every one would keep to their own Pariſh-Church, where they might have Conveniencies to perform both this and other Expreſſions of Devotion, better than they can in a Crowd; into which many throng, for leſſer benefits than they might have by a devout performance of theſe holy Offices.*

This then I conceive, according to what I have ſaid before, to be the Worſhip *of God; When men knowing and conſidering that there is one eternal infinite Being, of moſt glorious and tremendous Majeſty, and of incomprehenſible Goodneſs, Wiſdom, and Power, that is preſent in all places; who having made us with ſuch powers and faculties as fit us for his Worſhip and Service, and enriched us with ſuch benefits as give us greateſt obligations thereunto, doth expect that we perform the ſame to the greateſt advantage of his Glory and Honour. I ſay, when we knowing this, do go unto the place appointed for God's* Publick Worſhip, *and there do by actions worſhip God,* bowing our Heads and Knees *before him, and alſo by words declaring our belief of his Being, Preſence, Perfections, and wonderful Works, and our thankfulneſs for his infinite Mercies, and joy and delight in his Service; when we humbly and ſeriouſly attend to the ſolemn reading the Revelations of his divine Truth, and the Hiſtories of his mighty Works, and to his Promiſes and Threatnings whereby he hath enforced his Laws, and to the Promiſes and miraculous Gifts whereby he hath aſſured us that they are from himſelf, though by miniſtry of men, and ſuch-like things of great concernment to the glory of God, as well as our good, which are contained in the holy Scriptures: As alſo, when we make our Supplications and Prayers before him as our ſupream Lord and Governour, and thereby acknowledge his univerſal preſence and providence extending to all times, places, and perſons, with all their circumſtances, even in the minuteſt things, and withal over-ruling the greateſt: And when in all theſe we intermix due acts of* Adoration, *as continually intent on the*

conſide-

consideration of Gods Presence, and waiting for occasions, in the Offices of Praise, Hearing, and Prayers, to adore his divine Majesty internally and externally, and to express our devout affections by such actions as bowing and lifting up our Eyes and Hands to Heaven, &c. and also kneeling and standing as it is most fitly ordered by the Church: And when every one at the conclusion of the Service using some short Ejaculation to beg Gods pardon for what defects we have been guilty of, and his acceptance of our sincere desire to honour him, conclude this Service with humbly bowing before him at our leaving the Church; this, I say, I conceive to have as much Conformity to what all men, (that will enter into their own minds, and consider their natural apprehensions of things, and not be carried away with Canting Phrases) will judge most like to that which is the plain sence of Worshipping God.

'Tis some wonder to me, that many who seem to have a great zeal for the Worship of God, and make every thing they do about Religion, part of this Worship (as the Church-Covenant, which they add to that of Baptism, and the Suffrage of the People in the matter of the Ordination of Ministers, &c.) should be so inobservant of that Worship which Heathens have known by the light of Nature to be due to God, and which all that ever worshipped a God (true or false) have used. Certainly the Law of Nature is Gods most primitive Law, and cannot be altered while things remain the same; and all Divine Institutions in the matter of Worship, do but supply the defects of that Law, and were Modes of Worship added to that which Nature taught, for special Reasons, but no way exclusive thereof: and so are the Sacraments of the New Testament instituted on the same account. Besides, I have observed in the Writings of the Nonconformists, an acknowledgment of the duty of natural Worship, and such natural actions whereof it consists, but always this of Bowing (which is the chief) is left out, and some hard names, such as Cringing Genuflexion, &c. put upon it, to disgrace it; of which I could never find any reason, but their enmity to our Church, and their disuse of it in their own Way. 'Tis true, in one I find this, That Custom doth limit and determine Natures Laws; upon which account, Prostration, and wearing Sack-cloth, and rending Garments, are now disused: And since Bowing is still left out, it seems to be put among the number of those natural Expressions of Devotion determined by Custom. But what Custom is this? Surely not the Custom of the Community of Mankind, nor of the Church of Christ, but of some that have almost banished all other Expressions of Devotion but such, which may be as proper to the buying any Theological story, as to the Worship of God. But though Nature only teacheth the use of such behaviour in worshipping God as is most expressive of our Reverence towards him, and Customs may make some variation of those ex-

preſſions; yet this act of Bowing *ſeems ſo naturally fit, that the Decency thereof hath made it univerſally Cuſtomary, and never like to be determined by ſuch contrary Cuſtom as they urge, or to be diſparaged by ſuch hard Names as theſe men put upon it.*

I know that it is alſo ſaid, that the Act of Parliament forbids the uſe of any other Ceremonies than what are mentioned in the Rubrick; *and that this being not mentioned, it would be an act of diſobedience to uſe it. To which I anſwer, That the natural expreſſions of Worſhip and Reverence to Almighty God cannot be there meant: for then, lifting up the Hands and Eyes to Heaven in due place, may be as well thought to be forbidden as this; which I think none will affirm: But as God himſelf hath not inſtituted any thing poſitively in the time of the Law, when he was (as it were) the Temporal Monarch of the* Jews, *about his Natural Worſhip, (ſuch as was performed in their Synagogues) ſo our Governours have not thought fit to inſtitute any thing in this Caſe, but leave it to be done by every one as his Devotion moves him; but certainly they never intended to forbid it.*

It is alſo ſaid by ſome, that it may make the Service of God ludicrous, by being done too much; and every one hath not diſcretion to do it as he ought; and that the Papiſts *are grown to ſuch an extream in this action of* Bowing, *and ſuch Geſticulations about it, as make it ridiculous to* Proteſtants. *To which I anſwer, That I can be no Judge in that matter, becauſe I never ſaw the full Order of their Service; but I know that many eſteem ill of ſome things they are not uſed to, without juſt cauſe: the uſe of* Muſick *and* artificial Singing, *of* Reſponſes *and* Alternate Readings *in Divine Service, ſeem ridiculous to ſome that have been educated in another Way. But ſuppoſing this to be true, it ſeems an ill way of arguing, that becauſe a thing may be over-done, therefore it ſhould not be done at all. Some find fault with* Extempore Prayers, *that they are too long, and thoſe for that Way, find fault with ours in the Common-Prayer, that they are too ſhort: Should any man now ſay, 'Tis beſt then to have no Prayers at all? yet 'tis as much reaſon in this caſe as the other. But I think there is more likelihood of defect than exceſs in this matter. Yet I would not be thought ſo confident in my aſſertions herein, as to condemn all that do not hold or practiſe as I do: but I humbly offer this, as other things, to the conſideration of the Wiſe, being willing to reform any thing in my thoughts or actions that I ſhall be convinced to be amiſs.*

I ſhall farther obſerve as to this matter of Gods Worſhip, that God expects ſuch Worſhip from us, as is ſuitable to the Revelations he hath made of himſelf unto us. It was cauſe of his great diſpleaſure againſt the Gentile world, that when they knew him to be God, they did not worſhip him as God: *his* eternal Power and Godhead *(though inviſible in it*

ſelf) was made evident *by the works of Creation which they had continually before their eyes; which therefore ſhould have taught them not to worſhip him under the reſemblances of* Corruptible things, *which was a diſhonour to the Eternity and Omnipotency of his Divine Nature.*

But now our Bleſſed Saviour hath farther revealed the incomprehenſible Deity, as ſubſiſting in a Trinity of perſons in the Unity of his Eſſence, and as manifeſted in our Fleſh in the ſecond perſon of that bleſſed Trinity: which revelation of God requires ſomething peculiar in the matter of Divine Worſhip from us Chriſtians. It hath been received as a matter of Faith by the Catholick Church, That the Trinity in Unity and the Unity in Trinity is to be worſhipped; *and that our bleſſed Saviour, as God and man, is to be honoured* as we honour the Father. *Now it ſeems to me, that there is ſuch an excellent Order in our Liturgie for the performance of the Worſhip of God and our bleſſed Saviour according to theſe Evangelical Revelations, that 'tis ſcarce to be equalled in any other Way, eſpecially that which is ſet up in competition with it. And I doubt not, all thoſe that will impartially conſider the* Reſponſes, *the* Te Deum, *the* Gloria Patri, *(which we ſo frequently uſe, becauſe it is ſo ſuitable to Goſpel-Worſhip of the bleſſed Trinity) as alſo the* Creed, *the* Letany, *and the* Communion-Service; *and how God is honoured in the Three perſons, and yet as one God, and our Saviour invocated and acknowledged as God-man advanced to the higheſt dignity at the right hand of God in all theſe, will think as I do. I know prejudice hinders men from obſerving what is excellent in any thing, but eſpecially ſuch things as they are not uſed to: but as I ſuppoſe none will deny that as God is thus to be worſhipped; ſo where men are not ſo prejudiced, I verily believe, they will think that in no Way they can do it better.*

There is ſomething alſo to be inferred as to this matter of Gods Worſhip, from the plentiful effuſion of the Spirit in Goſpel-times, and our Fellowſhip and Communion in that Spirit. There are ſome Phraſes in the New Teſtament which, I think, have been perverted to a wrong ſence; ſuch as Praying in the Holy Ghoſt, Worſhipping God in the Spirit, *&c. which I think may better be referred to the worſhipping God as revealed by the Goſpel (which is called* the miniſtration of the Spirit) *in the reſpect forementioned; or elſe our worſhipping God in Faith and Fervency, in Unity and Unanimity, without diſtinction of Jew and Gentile; in ſpirituality, without legal Types and Figures, and carnal Ordinances; in the vertue of Chriſts Merits, which was the truth of all the bloudy Sacrifices of atonement for acceptance with God in the legal Worſhip; and this, according to the revelations whereof the Spirit of Chriſt is Author, and by whoſe Gifts and Powers they were confirmed: I ſay, better reſerved to theſe things, than to praying without any prepared Form or ſtudy by help of the Spirit.*

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It seems to me, that if those Expressions had any relation to praying by any extraordinary and supernatural assistance of Gods Spirit, as was their praying in Languages they had never learnt, or in Expressions that were above any attainments they could be supposed to have by ordinary means; it must be appliable onely unto that time. For however an Opinion hath been insinuated of late, of a miraculous and supernatural assistance for the performance of that duty, which hath given confidence to many (who are naturally unable for the same) to venture on it, and that even in publick Administration, to the great dishonour of Religion, and just offence of all wise men: yet I think none will dare to affirm that any Christian or Minister hath any promise from God of such assistance of the Spirit of God, as may make it to be truely said, that he prays in the Spirit *in the sense above-mentioned. But now, as I first interpreted it of praying as the Revelations of the Spirit of Christ in the Gospel requires, it is appliable to all times; and this I think to be done (as in the forementioned respect of worshipping the Trinity in Unity, and our Lord and Saviour as God-man, so also) when our Prayers are ordered for the greatest advantage of Faith and fervency, and of the Union and Communion of all Saints; and so I think ours are.*

For in the first place, our Faith is helped by the assurance that we ask such things as are pleasing to God; and secondly, by the frequent mention of the merits of Christ: When we pray in the words which our Lord and Saviour hath taught us, and use the Form composed by men famous in the Church, and approved by multitudes of Christians, and of many Ages: when our prayers are order'd with great advice of the most Learned among our selves, and such as are most orderly called to direct the publick ministration; and when they are approved by all the Christians united under one civil Government, by their Representatives in Parliament; and when we may our selves consider and weigh the same before we use them, having them in our Books to read; certainly we may on all these accounts be more assured that we pray for such things as we ought, than when we joyn in a Prayer we never heard, and is the sudden conception of a private Minister, as the use is with those that are against our Way. Thirdly, the frequent mention of the Merits of our Saviour at the conclusion of our brief Collects, is more helpful to our Faith that we shall find acceptance with God, than when it is onely once at the end of a long continued Prayer.

2. *For fervency we have great help, having nothing to do but to apply our minds to earnestness in praising God and praying to him; no need of attending to hear what is spoken, that we may judge whether it be fit for us to joyn in or not: and when we know the Prayers, we can joyn with the Minister and Congregation, though we hear not every word he reads. And the briefness of the Prayers, wherein are such weighty and comprehen-*

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five Expressions, helps more to true fervency *than long Prayers, though the novelty and variety may more work on* mens Fancies.

3. *We have far more of the Fellowship and Communion of the Spirit in our Way, than in that which is set up against it. First, we agree with the Saints of all Ages in this, that the publick Worship of God is to be administred by a prepared Form, and not by the present conceptions of the Administrator: For I cannot understand that either the Jewish Church or the Christian did ever administer their publick Form in any other way (except what those persons did who were divinely inspired, as many were among the Jews, and in the first ages of the Church, who were said to prophecy when they uttered such excellent Psalms or Prayers* Extempore) *of which this is a sufficient demonstration to me, That in the Jewish Synagogues all things at this day are administred by Forms, and in all the Christian-Churches (that have not been accounted Enthusiastical) the same Way was ever observed; at least, none can deny that it now is so in all the Christian World, except those* Congregations *that are united in some odde opinion, and separate from the body of Christians; the onely considerable Body that ever admitted the other Way of administration, being the* Scots *and the* English *in the late Distractions; which (on many accounts) cannot be esteemed an orderly Settlement. Now since it hath scarce ever been known, that in matters sacred, and of long custom, great Alterations have been made, but with great Oppositions and Commotions, I conclude, that if in the beginning of the Jewish Worship in their Synagogues, or of the Christian Worship in the publick Assemblies, Prayers had been ordinarily used to be made in the* Extempore *way (except by inspired persons) that Way could not have been altered so universally as it was to the use of Forms, and yet we have no notice in History or Tradition of the same.*

2. *We use such Forms wherein we have the most Communion with other Christians that is possible; we use* the Psalms of *David, which as they have ever been a part of the Publick Worship of* Jews, *so also of* Christians; *The* Te Deum *hath been used very anciently, and received of abundance of Churches into their publick Liturgie; so the* Creeds, *and the* Collects *before the Epistles and Gospels; and the* General Confession *and* Absolution; *the* Gloria Patri; *and most parts of our Service, which is made up of the most approved and generally received Forms of Prayer that could be found, with accommodation to the present time.*

3. *In the use of the Common-Prayer, we have Communion most fully with the Christians united under one Government, which we call the* Church of *England, and with all that Congregation that we joyn with in publick Worship: whereas in the other Way we have no certain Communion but onely with the Minister, because we are not sure that any one in the*

the Congregation approves of all he says, nor it may be can we neither; and it is possible the Minister himself may speak that, which for want of premeditation, he on second thoughts may not approve himself. So that there cannot be so full Communion of the Spirit in that Way as in ours.

These things I have thought fit to hint, to beget a good opinion in the minds of men, of the established Order for the publick Worship of God. But I would not be thought to despise any that have a true love to God, and desire to honour and glorifie him in such a way of Worship as they think most acceptable to him, what mistakes soever misinformation and prejudices of Education and Converses may subject them unto. And I hope those that differ from me, will not reproach my fervent desire to promote Piety in the Way I best approve, and am many ways obliged to chuse before any other. And if what I have written would perswade them to make an honest trial, (not by standing at gaze to see what we do, or sitting by as unconcerned in the Worship we offer by the Common-prayer, onely to wait for the Preacher they desire to hear, but) by joyning heartily with us, according to the advice of this Paper; I do not doubt but they would soon leave wondering at my fervency in this Way. But if some should through misguided Zeal, or for the interests of their Party, fall foul on me for commending what they seek by all means to deprave, I am content to suffer as my Saviour did, while the Reproaches of those that reproach God (in condemning what by the Laws of Nature and Examples in Scripture he approves) fall upon me. And if those that approve this Way of Worship be made hereby the more fervent and devout in attending thereupon, I shall rejoyce in my labours and sufferings for their sakes. And I hope they will be so, when they consider, that in this Way, Devotion is not subject to be abused by the subtilty of ill men, as it hath been by those on both sides that differ from us: That here is no discouragement given to the weak and bashful, by exemplifying a way of devotion that is above their reach; nor any temptation to the bold and self-conceited to aspire, to their own shame, and the disturbance of the Church: That therein nothing but principles of Truth, that tend to Piety, Charity, Obedience to Superiours, Meekness, Moderation, and Peaceableness among our selves, are possible to be insinuated into our minds: That hereby we shall be greatly assisted in holy Meditations, (while our minds will be stored with abundance of excellent matter for the same) and in educating our Children religiously, in keeping our Families in unity and order, and performing the Worship belonging to the same; and many other great benefits that we shall experience in a devout attendance on the daily Service of God in publick appointed by this Church; by which means they will be more confirmed in their love hereunto, and become examples to others, who will be more effectually drawn to their duty, by observing the practice of this Way of Piety,

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than by disputations about it. And it seems to me, that nothing is more like to preserve this Church against the designs of its Enemies on both hands, than such fervency of true devotion in those that profess themselves the Children thereof: The effecting of which is the design of the ensuing Advice both to Readers *and* People.

WHile this Sheet was printing, I was told by a friend, that he heard the learned Dr. *Beveridge* (in a Sermon on *Titus* 2. 12. *March* 26.) declare that the import of the word *Worship* was our expressing Honour and Respect by bowing the Head and Shoulders; and that this action, as it had anciently been used in sacred Offices to signifie our adoration of Almighty God, so it is most fit and decent in the exercises of Religion now. I was much pleased that the judgement of so excellent a person, publickly declared, just at the coming out of this Book, (which I am sure he had not the least knowledge or intimation of) gave countenance to my Undertaking in this Preface.

Since that, I hearing the said Doctor read Prayers at one of the Lent-Sermons at his Church, it seemed to me such a perfect Exemplification of what I advise in the Book, that I might seem to have learnt all from his practice (though I never heard him before). And I have great hope, that the example of one so eminently Pious and Learned, and of so excellent a Temper, and such unwearied Labours in the Ministry, may do more toward introducing seriousness and reverence in Divine Worship, than these Papers can do themselves: wherefore I have ventured (without his knowledge) to propose his Example in conjunction with my other endeavours; humbly begging his pardon, if he be offended to have his Name mentioned by so unworthy a Pen.

Advice

SOME CONSIDERATIONS Offered to READERS and PEOPLE.

Directions for READERS.

HE that will perform this ſervice as he ought, muſt firſt be prepared with true Devotion in his Mind and Spirit.

Two things are needful for the explication of this. Firſt, that the expreſſion of Devotion is a neceſſary part of Worſhip. Secondly, that it will be difficult for the Reader to make ſuch Expreſſion, if he have not real devotion in himſelf.

For the firſt, I ſhall onely obſerve, that it is the very nature of Publick Worſhip, to be an outward expreſſion of ſuch inward affections of our Souls as are due unto God alone; and ſuch an expreſſion as is moſt unto his Honour, and our own and others Edification. This, I think, no man will deny. And for that reaſon, the Liturgie for this Publick Worſhip is fitted to expreſs a great fervency in ſupplicating the Divine Majeſty, (the Spring of all comfort) and a great joy and exultancy of mind, in Extolling and Praiſing the Divine Majeſty (which is the perfection of our Felicity). And alſo to be accompanied with actions ſuitable thereunto. And he that reads the Prayers with a rambling haſte, without ſuch due expreſſions of Devotion in the manner of his ſpeech and actions, quite alters the nature of the thing, and ſpoils the deſign of it.

Every man of any ſenſe, can diſcern the indecency of reading ſuch words as [**Lord have mercy upon us, Chriſt have mercy upon us, Lord have mercy upon us**] with ſuch a manner of

ſpeaking as ſignifies but little devotion and fervency of mind. And ſo they may alſo of ſaying the *Gloria Patri*, and *Te Deum*, *&c.* without ſuch cheerfulneſs of Speech, and reverent acts of Adoration as become the ſame. Neither can we think, that we honour God by any words we ſpeak, if we do not appear fervous and devout in pronouncing the ſame: nor will it at all edifie our ſelves or others. For words do not work here as Spells and Charms, but as rational Inſtruments that ſignifie the belief and affections of our Souls; which they cannot do, but by being ſo pronounced, and accompanied with fit actions as aforeſaid. So that upon theſe reaſons, the Reader is obliged to the expreſſion of Devotion in his performance of this Service.

But beſides, he that is careleſs in making ſuch expreſſion of Devotion in reading the Prayers, doth very much to prevent the converſion of Infidels and Papiſts, and to excuſe the Nonconformity of all kind of Separatiſts, and to encourage the Prophane in their neglect to attend theſe Sacred Offices.

To explain this, I muſt intreat the Reader to conſider, that notwithſtanding the confuſion of Tongues, there is one univerſal Language underſtood by all Mankind, high and low, and the ignorant as well as the learned: And thoſe that know not the meaning of the words we ſpeak, or can well perceive whether we ſpeak Sence or Nonſence, yet by this can give account of what we ſay or do as to the general tendency thereof. And this Language conſiſts in the Tone of our Words, and Mode of our Actions; by theſe they know whether a man means Love or Hatred, Anger or Good pleaſure, Honour or Contempt, in the common converſation of this life: and ſo in Religion they know by theſe, whether a man, being in the Church, means the adoration of a God, or a phantaſtick obſervation of perſons or things there preſent; whether he means a natural delight in exerciſing his Gifts and natural powers, and in attending to the muſick of Words, Voices, or Inſtruments, (for there is no great difference, if no more be meant) or a Spiritual employment of his mind upon God, and the things of Religion.

And this kind of Language, (for ſo I here call it) as it is underſtood moſt generally, ſo it works moſt powerfully on the minds of men, and diſpoſeth them to believe what they expreſs, more than any Rhetorick of words can do. And though theſe expreſſions, as well as that of Words, requires ſome caution for the right underſtanding them, and may be abuſed by Hypocrites to cheat and deceive the world; yet ſince, according to mens underſtanding of them, and till they are convinced of the Hypocriſie, they do incline and affect their

their minds, men are to account themſelves concerned to make ſuch expreſſions for their conviction and edification. And it is not a thing arbitrary, and at mens liberty, whether they will uſe them or not: For ſince they are ſo ſignificant of our adoration of God, and fervency in our Prayers to him, and exultancy in his praiſes; we muſt be obliged thereunto, by vertue of the Commands of worſhipping God, of praying to and praiſing of him; beſides the many Commands and Examples in Scripture for ſuch outward Expreſſions. And indeed, the Minds of men are ſo apt to be inclined by theſe, that they will ſcarce believe we truly mean the Worſhip of God, except we expreſs it by ſuch ſigns. To apply this to the preſent purpoſe.

All Nations, according to that knowledge which naturally they have of this, have inſtituted and practiſed ſuch Expreſſions of their Honour and Reſpect unto the God they worſhipped; and the more the *Papiſts* have declined from the ſubſtance of true Piety, the more they have endeavoured to keep up the reputation of it by outward ſigns of Devotion; and all *Sects*, as they have formerly, ſo do they ſtill make the appearances of extraordinary Devotion, the means to introduce their Errours and Schiſms. Now taking this for granted, that it is part of the Law written in the hearts of all men, that whatever is acknowledged to be God, is to be worſhipped and adored; and that as the Name of God is great and dreadful, ſo his Worſhip ſhould be awful and ſerious; and that they all underſtand by the means forementioned when it appears to be ſo: I ſay, on ſuch premiſes we may conclude, that be our Religion never ſo good, they will never be inclined to conſider of it, and ſo brought to embrace it, while they perceive a defect of the Expreſſions of Devotion in the moſt ſolemn Offices of Divine Worſhip performed therein, and think they outdo us in a matter they are ſo certain to be good and well-pleaſing to God, and profitable to men.

And I believe there can ſcarce be aſſigned a more probable Cauſe of the great averſeneſs both of *Papiſts* and *Separatiſts* to joyn in our Common-Prayer: For both theſe have great appearances of Devotion in their ſeveral ways: The *Papiſts*, in their frequent bowing, and other acts of adoration; the *Fanaticks*, in their fervency and ſeriouſneſs in Extemporary Prayers: And theſe latter (in whom we are moſt concerned in this matter) are neceſſitated to ſeriouſneſs and intention, as that without which no man can pray in that way with any tolerable ſence and method; and many who with greateſt intention and ſeriouſneſs can ſcarce do either, are the more obliged to expreſs a greater fervency, and to call upon the Name of God, and uſe many of his Titles and Attributes, to cover the defects of their invention. But

this however looks like the Expreſſion of a great Devotion, and is ſo underſtood by the unwary multitude. If therefore they perceive no Expreſſions in our way that bear proportion to the ſame, it is impoſſible but they will prefer theirs before it; and hence they generally argue, that they are not bound to joyn in a way of Worſhip that is worſe, when they have opportunity to have Communion in a way that is better. Now the main thing wherein this betterneſs conſiſts, in their Opinion, is the appearances which they perceive in the Miniſters of their way of a great ſenſe of Gods inviſible preſence, and a great ſerioufneſs and ferveney of mind in their Prayers to him; which they do not perceive in our way, when the Prayers are read without ſuch Expreſſions of Devotion as I now affirm to be neceſſary.

And then it encourages the profaner ſort in neglecting theſe holy Offices: For when they ſee the *Readers* of the Prayers ſo ſlight and ſuperficial, and to expreſs ſo little ſerioufneſs and Devotion in Reading, they will never think themſelves guilty of any great ſin in being ſlight and careleſs in hearing, or very indevout if they never come to hear them at all. Theſe things ſhew a neceſſity of expreſſing Devotion in reading the Prayers. But,

Secondly, this men will very hardly do, if they have not the truth of it in their own Souls. 'Tis true, men may very eaſily diſcern by natural Reaſon, the deceney of humouring words with a *pronuntiation* ſuitable to the matter they contain, and of joyning therewith a fit and comely *deportment* of the Body; and they may know by common obſervation, that as this is Praiſe-worthy, ſo it is of good Report among men: And ſo it may be thought, that in compliance with their own Reaſon, and to gain applauſe among men, *Readers* may well enough compoſe themſelves to counterfeit Devotion in performing the Office of Common-prayer; and that, although they have none of the truth of it in themſelves.

I confeſs, for my own part, I think a counterfeit Piety ſo much better for the Church than a profeſs'd Formality, that I wiſh the Prayers were devoutly read, on what account ſoever it be done. But when I conſider how Errour hath weakened the reſpect that ſhould be had to Devotion in the way of the Common-prayer, and obſerve the great ſlightneſs and general formality that is common in hearing it, (I am afraid) this will prevent that conſideration in moſt *Readers*, and quite inervate the force of ſuch Arguments; ſo that if men have not a great Devotion in themſelves, they are more like to be aſhamed to expreſs it, than enclined to counterfeit it: For when they ſee that men generally think they have acquitted themſelves very well in the matters

ters of God's Worſhip, if they do diligently attend to what the Miniſter prays and preaches in the Pulpit, though they little regard what the *Readers* do in the Desk; *Readers* will think it little concerns them to regard it neither; and ſo they are apt to haſten the Prayers out of the way, to make room for that which they ſee is chiefly intended. But now if we may ſuppoſe a *Reader* to deſign this, we may find reaſon to think that it is much harder for any one in this caſe to perſonate the man he is not, than in any other that can be named: for the ſenſe of an Omniſcient Being, who is eſpecially preſent, and requires *truth in the inward parts*, abhorring all hypocriſie and diſſimulation, and that more peculiarly in the Offices of his immediate Worſhip and Service: I ſay, the ſence of this will be apt to beget ſuch a dread in their minds, as will hinder their attention to the right performance of a counterfeit Devotion. For certainly, as nothing is more helpful to the moſt decent expreſſion of Devotion (where it truly is) than the lively ſenſe of Gods Preſence; ſo nothing can be more apt to diſcompoſe the mind that deſigns not at all to expreſs, but onely to counterfeit Devotion. Again, mens defect of true Piety oft betrays them to groſs Vices, which not onely impreſs a guilt on their minds, but alſo make them cautious, that all that know them will judge their ſeeming Devotion in the performance of this Office to be but a kind of Pageantry; and this will very much increaſe the difficulty of the thing. So that I think I may conclude, that he which would read the *Common-Prayer* well, ought to be prepared with true Devotion.

But here I muſt inſert a Caution, that I do not approve of them that make a ſcorn of the appearances of Devotion in ſome *Readers*, becauſe they are reported (it may be truly) to be often guilty of intemperance in drinking: For I believe, notwithſtanding that, they may be ſincere. *There is no man that lives and ſins not*: And there is a great deceitfulneſs in ſin, and this deceit operates moſt on the perſons where it moſt prevails; and therefore I have often obſerved, (and ſo have wiſer men) that ſome perſons whom all the Town have marked for covetous men, would not believe themſelves to be ſo: and ſo it is with Spiteful, Rageful, Froward, and Revengeful perſons, and many others. And it may be ſo with theſe

And though Intemperance (the ſin oftenеſt inſiſted on) may ſeem to the Objectors (and many others not much inclined thereunto) to be a greater vice than the forementioned, yet it may not ſo ſeem to them that are guilty; and ſo they may think that their ordinary meaſures, though greater than others, is no ſin, and their lapſes into ſuch as they cannot deny to be Exceſſes, and to diſguiſe them (as

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all vices in ſome kind do!) may be pardoned by the mercies of the Goſpel, on the exerciſe of their daily Repentance. And though I think (as I ſaid) that there is much of Cheat in this, yet while they believe their ſins to be conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace, and profeſs and practiſe a kind of Repentance, (though not ſuch as will obtain their Pardon) I ſay, in ſuch caſes I believe their expreſſions of Devotion may not be charged with Hypocriſie: For they may truly mean to adore, ſupplicate, and praiſe God; and it may be the more truly, becauſe they think he will not exact ſuch obſervances as they think themſelves unable to perform. And I am afraid that ſort of men who moſt complain of this *Reader*, hold ſome Principles that give too much help to that vain hope whereby ſuch men cheat themſelves to their eternal ruine; and while they blame others, ſin deceives in this matter even themſelves. For it is a great cheat to think, that becauſe men do amiſs in ſome things, God will accept nothing that they do; and as great, that men may commend nothing in ſuch: For, as it is evident, never any did any thing well for God, but it was accepted at his hand, unto ſuch purpoſes as were meet, and tended to draw men farther, and not diſcourage them. *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Ahab*, *Jehu*, and many more, are inſtances of this: And all wiſe men, and ſome Inſpired ones, have commended whatever of Vertue or Piety they found in the worſt of men: *Paul*, for inſtance, in the *Jews*. Therefore I conclude, though ſome *Readers* who perform this Service well, and make fit expreſſions of Devotion in their outward behaviour; I ſay, though they may be often guilty of Exceſs and Intemperance, yet we cannot condemn them of Hypocriſie, nor ought to diſcourage them in what they do well: but our Duty is by all means to *admoniſh them daily*, and to convince them of the *deceitfulneſs of their ſin*, that they be not *hardned* by it; and perſwade them of the neceſſity of univerſal Repentance and Obedience, as that without which God will never accept them into the embraces of his Fatherly love, however he may forbear them ſome temporal Judgments, and give them ſome temporal Bleſſings; much leſs will he bring them to his Heavenly Kingdom: Nor can the true Children of God and this Church maintain ſuch intimate Converſes with them, nor ſhew ſuch brotherly kindneſs to them, as to ſober Chriſtians. Nor ought the Church to continue them in her Communion, if they do not ſpeedily reform and amend their lives. But yet we may not decline their Miniſtration, nor make any Schiſm in or from a Church on their account.

But becauſe I would not be thought hereby to excuſe ſuch men, or give them any encouragement to preſume, I intreat them to conſider, that

that the Evangelical Precepts of *Perfection* are plain and cogent: The Grace vouchsafed is *mighty and powerful*; and to those that will *fight* manfully, the victory is certain; every one that *seeks* as he ought, shall find *a way of escape* out of every temptation; *for God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able:* If we will *resist the Devil, he will fly from us*; if we will *walk in the Spirit*, we *shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*; for *the Spirit that is in us, is stronger than he which is in the world*, or than the most importunate lusts of the Flesh. Therefore it is onely our willingness to yield, that makes us easie to be overcome: and he that thinks otherwise, dishonours the Grace of God, discourages vigorous Endeavours after that *Perfection* which is the *mark* we should all aim at, puts the Conscience on the Rack, or, as the Prophets phrase is, *stays long in the place of breaking forth of Children*, enjoying no ease and content in his mind, and prevents himself of the highest Joy in the hope of Eternal Life: Besides, he is an offence to his Brethren, tempts them to *forsake*, if not *abhor* Gods Altar, and prove *Separatists* from the best Church in the world, and neglect their attendance on the most solemn and edifying Form of Divine Service; and many more mischiefs which are consequent unto an indulging themselves in that unmanly vice I here treat of. Wherefore I earnestly beseech all *Readers* to break off all evil Customs of this kind, and to endeavour a perfect Temperance and Sobriety.

3. Being prepared as before, he must endeavour to carry a sober Gravity in his Countenance, as becoming his sense of approaching the Divine Presence, in the most solemn Exercises of holy Worship; And also the knowledge of this Office, that he is Gods Embassador to his People, and their Spoaksman to God, (for so is every *Reader* rightly ordained, as well as the *Preacher*; and in reading the Scripture as a Minister of the Church, he speaks from God with the greatest Authority) he should therefore suppress in himself all timerousness and bashfulness, and carry a decent Majesty and gravity in his Deportment and Countenance.

4. He must make those *ends* to which the several parts of this Service are designed, *to be his own:* He must endeavour by reading the *Sentences of Scripture* at the beginning, and the solemn *Preface*, to compose the minds of the people to great seriousness and true penitence: By reading the *Absolution*, to confirm their hopes of Mercy and Pardon but without presumption: By reading the *Prayers*, and repeating all parts, of Praise and Thanksgiving, and the *Responses* and mutual provocations to Devotion, *&c.* he must earnestly intend not onely the expression of his own holy affections, but to excite the like in other

others. There is a vaſt difference between the bare reading the *Prayers*, and this manner of ſpeaking to God and man, thereby making the words as if they were our own.

5. He muſt endeavour, by a clear Voice, and diſtinct Pronuntiation, to make himſelf underſtood of all, and by a treatable Speech to make it eaſie for the people to follow him, eſpecially in thoſe parts of Worſhip wherein they are to joyn their Voices: But yet not ſo ſlow neither, that many ſhould run before him in repeating the *Prayers* and the *Belief*, as people are apt to do; which ſeems to me a very indecent thing, and an affront to the Miniſterial Office, which is always to lead in the publick Duties of *Religion*. And in repeating the *Pſalms*, he ſhould make ſuch obſervation, that his Speech may bear proportion with the generality of the Congregation; and that there be no pauſe between their ending one Verſe and his beginning another, but that he come in with them at the laſt word; which makes this Exerciſe more like *Pſalmody*, the thing for which it is intended: a thing wherein the people do much want to be well inſtructed, as that which would turn their prejudices againſt this manner of reading the *Pſalms*, into a great Devotion, and delight therein, as a thing which hath moſt of Heaven of any thing done here on Earth.

6. In the *Solemn Prayers*, he muſt put on the greateſt gravity, and outward expreſſion of humbleſt Reverence and Devotion; this being one principal part of Divine Worſhip, wherein we apply our ſelves moſt immediately to God himſelf, and make the neareſt approaches unto his Throne of Grace. And he muſt labour to excite the ſame expreſſions of Devotion in the People, as by his own Example, ſo by the affectionate pronunciation of theſe words appointed thereunto, **Let us pray**: than which nothing can be better ordered, to diſtinguiſh between *Solemn Prayers*, and thoſe we offer up in the way of *Pſalmody*.

Eſpecially in the repetition of the *Lords Prayer*. We cannot but know, that as God hath greateſt regard to that, as the compoſure of his dear and onely Son, (his eternal wiſdom appearing in our fleſh) and the *Catholick Church*, guided by the Divine Spirit, hath ever had it in great veneration, as the inſtruction of her Lord and Saviour in the moſt principal part of her duty, and declaration of her *Catholick Unity*: So every Miniſter of God and his Church ſhould ſhew his great eſteem thereof, by the moſt ſolemn and devout manner of repeating the ſame. Beſides, in honour of the Author, and for the excellency of the matter, and the comprehenſiveneſs of the words, as well as in conformity to God and his Church, this is required at their hands.

hands. And I inſiſt particulaarly on this, becauſe I have obſerved, that many *Readers* having this Prayer more perfectly by heart than any of the reſt, they ramble it over with a greater haſt, and have leſs care to expreſs that Devotion which becomes this Solemn Exerciſe in reading that, than any other.

7. He that *reads*, ſhould not onely obſerve to do it in ſuch poſtures as the Church hath ordered, as ſtanding or kneeling in ſuch parts of Worſhip as is proper to each; but alſo with ſuch natural actions, as lifting up the Eyes or Hands, *&c.* which the Church hath not ordered; becauſe they are ſo obvious to the reaſon of all Mankind, as ſuch outward expreſſions of the inward Devotion of our minds, which are due to God by the very Law of our nature: and they are indeed ſo natural, that it is ſcarce poſſible for a man truely devout to forbear the uſe of them. And it ſeems to me a thing wonderful, how Satan hath blinded the minds of men profeſſing the beſt Religion in the world, that they do not more plainly perceive the decency of ſuch acts of Devotion, nor more generally practiſe them.

8. He ought alſo to make ſuch fit Pauſes, where the people are to change their poſture from kneeling to ſtanding, that they may have time to riſe up, and compoſe themſelves for fit acts of Adoration in repeating the words of *Glory*, wherewith we begin the Office of Praiſe and Thankſgiving.

9. He ought alſo to give to each part of the Service the proper accent or meaſure of Voice belonging to the ſame: For it is not ſeemly that all ſhould be read in one Tone; but thoſe parts that are for *Inſtruction*, wherein he ſpeaks to the people, ſhould have one manner of reading; the *Prayers*, wherein he alone ſpeaks for them, another; and thoſe *Pſalms* and *Prayers* wherein they ſpeak with him by turns, another. He that hath no underſtanding of this, nor doth obſerve it as it ought to be, can never *read* well.

10. It is alſo fit to give an Emphaſis to ſome words in Reading, for the better expreſſion of the devout affections which they may be ſuppoſed to excite. But ſome *Readers* have accuſtomed themſelves to a kind of devout Tone, which puts an Emphaſis on Words where none is required; which plainly ſhews an affectation of Devotion where none is: Whereas nothing ſhews well in the Miniſtries of Religion, but that which appears to be natural, and the true effect of a devout Mind, directed by ſober Judgment. But this is moſt indecent in the repetition of the *Pſalms*, and all Alternate readings, becauſe the people can obſerve no Concord in this, as they may when it is read with an even Voice, without ſuch long Pauſes as ſuch kind of Tones are uſually accompanied withal.

11. And it is very convenient, that in *Reading* thoſe things that the people are leaſt perfect in, the *Reader* ſhould take moſt care to ſpeak diſtinctly and audibly; which I have often obſerved they do not: The reaſon ſeems to be, that the care of *reading* right what they are leaſt uſed unto, takes off from the regard they ſhould have to read alſo that all may hear. The things I mean, are the *Collects* which are proper to ſeveral days, the Prayers to be uſed on ſeveral occaſions, and the Chapters that are read out of the *Apocrypha*, &c.

12. Though it be a great advantage to this *devout manner* of *Reading*, to be ſo perfect, that he need not have a continual eye on his Book; yet until he be ſo, the *Reader* is not to venture on his memory alone: becauſe miſtakes are very indecent, and diſcompoſe the Auditory.

13. He ought alſo to make careful proviſion that all things be ready look'd out beforehand, that there be no cluttering of leaves in the midſt of the Service.

And here I ſhall humbly offer to the conſideration of the Governours of Choires in Cathedral Churches, the Reformation of a great Diſorder that proceeds from the neglect of ſomething of this kind. I have obſerved my ſelf, and heard many complain, ſome out of Devotion, others in Reproach of our Service, that the Singing-boys are ſo rude and indecent in their behaviour, that it makes that Service ſeem more like a carnal Divertiſement, than the ſolemn Worſhip of Almighty God: The occaſion whereof ſeems to me, to be the neglect of due care that all the Singing-men and Boys know beforehand what is to be ſung, and have it, every one, turned down ready in their Books: for the chief occaſion of their talking to the Singing men, and among themſelves, is about this matter; and their being ſo uſed to talk in the midſt of the Prayers, begets a profane Spirit in them, and is ſuch an excuſe for them, that they are ready to talk and laugh together, on other accounts, in the very face of the Biſhops and the Maſters of the Church: which hath given great offence to many; and, I believe, the ſuffering this hath been one great cauſe of the contempt of that Service among the Common people, and this makes the Reformation thereof the more needful. I was lately told of an Order in ſome *Lutheran* Churches, (whoſe Service conſiſts chiefly in Singing the Pſalms of *David* to the praiſe and glory of God, and Songs of love and honour to our bleſſed Saviour, compoſed by excellent perſons among themſelves) that they have twice a day Aſſemblies for this Service; and that all may know what is to be ſung, there is a Table hung up at the entrance of the Church or Choire, where it is written down what Pſalms and Songs are appointed

pointed for the day; and the people (coming early to Church) go first to this place, and take notice what they are to sing, and look it out ready before the Service begings. Such an Order in our Choires would prevent the Boys running up and down with Books to tell what Anthem is sung, which is also very indecent.

Neither is the care of cleanness and neatness both of Body and Garments to be neglected. The reason of the Judicial Laws for the Washings and curious Garments of the Priests, which was for the beauty and glory of the Worship they were to perform, seems to me to infer thus much at least, That those who administer holy things, should avoid all offensive nastiness and slovinliness, and appear before God and the Congregation as becomes the Ministers of the most holy God, and of the Church, which Christ designes to be *without spot or wrinkle*: and especially in administring those things which are more sacred and glorious.

The observation of the great proneness of *poor Readers* to neglect this, hath perswaded me of the convenient institution of the *Surplice*, to teach them cleanliness, and cover their defects therein; which yet will not prevail with many to keep Themselves clean, nor That neither.

Thus have I hinted such things as seem to make for the Solemnity and Efficacy of Divine Service; and the contrary whereunto, I have either observed my self, or heard others complain to be indecent: which I humbly offer to the consideration of those that are to read Publick Prayers. And I hope they will be moved the more to the exercise of their consideration in this matter, when they see the people do take notice what is decent and what indecent in their performance; and concern themselves as much to have the Prayers well read, as to have excellent Sermons Preached. And upon such consideration, they will find far better Rules to direct themselves, than any my Pen can offer. And I might use some Arguments to perswade all *Readers* to attend unto such most serious consideration; but I shall mention onely this for a Conclusion: That every one of them did declare (at their Ordination) *their belief that they were inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take on them this Office and Ministry to serve God, for the promoting his Glory, and edifying his People.* Which if they truly were, the same Spirit will certainly incline them to such consideration as is necessary to the well performance of their Office to those great ends to which it is designed: and this is all I aim at in this Paper.

Advice to the PEOPLE.

HE that will perform this Service as he ought, muſt be duely prepar'd for the ſame. Now theſe Preparations are either Moral or Natural. The Moral are, 1. That we compoſe our minds to ſuch a frame as becomes the Worſhip and Service of the moſt high God, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt; and that we may perform it in the Fellowſhip and Communion of the Holy Ghoſt. He that thinks of nothing elſe at his going to Church, but of hearing ſome celebrated *Preacher*, that hath a rare *Gift of Prayer*, or *excellent method in Preaching*, where he ſhall have his mind ſtir'd up to good thoughts, or his Fancy pleaſed with curious Notions, his Doubts reſolved in hard points of Divinity, and himſelf aſſiſted to defend the Party he is of againſt their oponents, and ſuch-like things: I ſay, he that hath onely ſuch thoughts at his going to Church, will never concern himſelf to be ſo ſerious and compoſed, and to put on ſuch a heavenly frame of mind, as he that thinks *he is going to do the work of Angels, to adore and worſhip that eternal Being that is enthron'd in the Heavens, and that Lamb of God at his right hand, who hath taken away the ſins of the world: To celebrate their Praiſes, to make our common Supplications to God through his Son: And to witneſs our ſubjection to the governance of the holy Doctrine and Laws delivered by immediate inſpiration of his bleſſed Spirit*, &c.

And as this is evident from the nature of the thing, ſo is it apparent in the effects among men. For while theſe of the latter ſort have always been concerned to approach the Houſe of God with great reverence, and at their coming thereinto to be uncovered, and to bow down and worſhip, and to fall on their knees at their coming to the place of their ſtation, to implore God's gratious aſſiſtance in the performance of this ſolemn and ſacred Service; they of the former ſort cry out of theſe things, that they are Idolatry, Will-worſhip, and Superſtition, *&c.* And though not one of a thouſand of them know the original import of thoſe words, nor ſcarce what themſelves mean by them; yet are they extream confident in their own way of lightneſs and irreverence in their approaches to ſacred Offices, (eſpecially in publick, where it is moſt indecent) the reaſon whereof is evident to me to be this; That they ſee no neceſſity of ſuch preparation for attendance on the Publick Worſhip in their Way, wherein

wherein they find themselves as apt to be affected by the Passions and Rhetorick, or Voyce and Action of the Preacher, without such preparation, as with it; and therefore think it sufficient to lift up their Hearts to God in pious Meditations, when so affected, without any outward expressions of Reverence and Adoration. Therefore they think it needless that we do the fore-mentioned actions in our Way, and for that reason load the same with such approbrious names. I confess I cannot but wonder (though I know some will be very angry with me for it) at the little Exceptions that are made against these things; and I cannot but hope, that (notwithstanding their great confidence) our opposites hercin on serious thoughts may come to have a better opinion thereof.

I intend not Disputation, (for I pretend not to Learning) nor doth the thing require it: For every thing that is fit to be done, is not fit to be disputed; because that would be to suppose a difficulty where there is none. But I shall propound a few things to be considered, that may bring men to right thoughts in this matter.

1. That the belief of the invisible universal presence of the most glorious and onely adorable Being, who hath made and doth govern all things, is one chief Foundation of all Religion.

2. That the belief of this special presence of his Glory and Grace where the Offices of his solemn publick Worship is administred, is the chief reason of all religious Assemblies.

3. That the most express and intelligible acknowledgment of our sense of this his glorious and gracious Presence, is required of all the members of such Assemblies, both by the nature of the thing, and divine Revelation.

4. That uncovering the Head, bowing the Body, and falling down on our Knees, doth plainly signifie such acknowledgment, and that to the most dull and unlearned of Mankind; especially if they do but know that we meet together to worship God, as I observed before.

5. That because it may not be possible for them to mistake the meaning of those actions, which is the chief matter of offence, our Custom is, when we bow down and worship, to do it towards the place where the Holy Table is. Now every man that will but enter into any consideration of this matter, (which is the chief cause of exception) must necessarily perceive, that if that action be done at all in the place of publick Worship, it cannot be fitly done any other way. For the Quires, where it is most customary, (some of them especially that I have seen) have one entrance against the Table, and two others, one of each side, over against each other. Now if a man at his entrance at the former, should think it better to face quite

about,

about, and bow towards the Door he came in at, than to bow right forward towards the Table, I believe he would make himself ridiculous to all the people; and so it would be, if he prefer bowing towards the people sitting on either side. Again, if two making their entrance at the Doors on either side, should chuse to bow strait before them, rather than to turn towards the Altar, can any think it would look so like an act of Divine Worship, as it would be like their passing a Complement on each other? And if it should be done the other way, there would be a greater likeness of civil respect to the Company, than of Religious Worship. And something of like nature would be found in bowing any way but that in use, however the entrance into or scituation of the Quires be. So that the onely matter to be disputed is, Whether it be lawful and fit, when we first come into the place purposely appointed, and presently to be used for the most solemn Exercises of Divine Worship, to make an acknowledgment that we are sensible we are come to appear in the special presence of God, to do him the utmost worship and honour we are able, by humbly bowing our selves that way where there is something that may help to mind us of his condescention to be so graciously present, but nothing that may so much as seem to be the object of our respect, but Gods invisible presence. And this is a thing that seems to me to need no Disputation, as I said at first.

I know 'tis easie to multiply words on this Subject: but my intended brevity permits no more. I shall onely add these two things farther on this head: 1. To remember those I write to, that it is their duty so to manage all their secular concerns and worldly business, that they may never be habitually unprepar'd for sacred Offices, as all are that live a carnal and unrighteous life.

And 2ly, that at the time when they are presently to approach the special presence of the Almighty, whose Name is great and dreadful, they actually prepare themselves, by a voluntary composure of their Minds to attend the consideration of the glorious Greatness and amiable Goodness of God, whom they are going to worship; as also that he is specially present in holy Assemblies; and by the forementioned acts declare this sense of their minds, and assist their own Devotion, and excite the Devotion of others. And this they are taught by the best of Preachers, in his *Eccleſiaſt. Chap.* 5. *Verſ.* 1. *Keep thy foot when thou goeſt to the houſe of God; and be more ready to hear, than to offer the Sacrifice of fools:* which I the rather mention, because I have heard it perverted to a contrary sence: As if men ought hastily to run into the Church, and immediately fix themselves to attend to the Prayer or Sermon; and if we do fall on our Knees to worship and

beg

beg Gods gracious acceptance of our Service, and assistance to perform as we ought what we there do, this is but the *Sacrifice of Fools*. Wherein briefly I observe these mistakes.

1. That the onely or chief part of Gods Worship in *Solomon*'s time was *Hearing of Sermons*; when we have scarce any notice in Scripture that in the Temple there was any at all.

2. That this Custom which they condemn, was as ancient as the time of *Solomon* (which it may be they would grant a mistake, as being too much for its credit, if the whole strength of their Plea from the Text consisted not therein).

3. That this was the onely or chief thing to which the name of *Sacrifice* was then appropriate: which I dare say they do not believe, if ever it were at all called so.

4. If that be meant by Sacrifices, that it must be the manner of the action, and not the ill manner of performance, that must denominate it the *Sacrifice of Fools*. For we know there were such things as are in the most primitive and proper sence *Sacrifices*, and that of Gods own appointment, that by ill circumstances might be made the *Sacrifices of Fools*. If any of these be a mistake, as I believe they all are, no proof of any ill in this Custom can result from this Scripture.

But it is not more certain that an ill humour in the Eye gives its own tincture to all Objects that are presented to it, than it is, that false opinions being once fixed in the mind, make men think all Scriptures sound the praise of their own Way, and the reproach of others. But if I might give the instruction which this Scripture affords, it should be this: That as the *Jews* of old were not to think it enough that they went to the Temple, and did their Sacrifices as was required for the matter of them, but ought diligently to attend to a due preparation and the right manner of performance, without which they would be accounted in the sight of God but *the Sacrifice of Fools*, in which *God hath no pleasure*: So Christians now ought to have the same care, lest their slight and irreverent approach to the house of God, or any indecencies or disorders in what they do there, may render the Evangelical Sacrifices of our selves in the forementioned acts of Adoration, Prayer, Praise, *&c.* unpleasing unto God. And this is the thing to which I admonish, in our moral preparation for this Service. Secondly, The natural preparations are, an ability to read distinctly that which we are to read, and to say perfectly by heart the daily Psalms and Hymns; that we may perform our part with the better grace.

'Tis certainly a thing most evident to any that will consider it, that

what

is to be done in the ſight and preſence of Almighty God, and eſpecially when it is to be done moſt immediately for his Glory and Honour, ſhould be done in the moſt excellent manner that is poſſible; and therefore it will need no proof to thoſe that believe what I have already written on that Subject, that this which I adviſe is a great and moſt concerning duty. And I the rather inſiſt on it, becauſe I have obſerved many who profeſs to be great approvers of the Common Prayer, and all the Orders of our Church, yet ſeldom or never read their part of the Pſalms, or joyn in the Repetition of the *daily Hymns and Reſponſes*: which I impute to their great careleſsneſs in this matter. And many that do what is here required, do it ſo ill, that it is apparent they want ſome excitation to their duty hereabout.

I ſhall therefore intreat all that are defective herein, to employ their leiſure hours to practiſe a more perfect and punctual way of Reading; which will be a thing of credit and uſe to them otherwiſe, as well as here. I have ſometimes been preſent, when men of good Quality and Eſtates have taken upon them to read ſome Pamphlet in a Coffee-houſe; but read at ſuch a pitiful rate, that a man could ſcarce make ſence of it, or be ever the wiſer for hearing it: which is a reproach to them among wiſe men; for whatever the defects of their Education have been, it might eaſily have been ſupplied by their own diligence, if an inordinate love of Company and other Divertiſements did not make them too much to decline profitable Retirements.

And I would intreat all Parents and Maſters to conſider the obligation that is upon them in this reſpect, to look that their Children and Servants do the ſame. We owe not onely our ſelves, but all ours, to the honour and ſervice of Almighty God: And if Children were taught, as they ſhould be, their duty to worſhip and praiſe God in the publick Aſſemblies, and encouraged therein by the example of their Elders, it would be a mighty Argument to perſwade them to learn the moſt diſtinct and graceful way of Reading. I have been much pleaſed to ſee the good ſucceſs of this care in ſome Parents that are well affected to the Common Prayer, whoſe Children read their part of the Pſalms with a better grace than many Men. And when they do attain to a perfection herein, it will beget a great delight in that heavenly Exerciſe, and make them long to attend the Prayers; and this doubtleſs will be a mighty antidote againſt Prophaneneſs and Schiſm, and implant in our minds that Doctrine whence a holy Life cannot but ſpring.

3. That being prepared as before, we ſhould endeavour our ſelves to perform

form our part of this Service in the beſt manner we are able. There are ſome things which I have obſerved in the performance of the People, that ſeem to be very indecent: As firſt, That they ſpeak when they ſhould hear; repeating together with the Miniſter, and often before him, the *Prefatory Admonition* wherewith the Miniſter is to begin this Service; and alſo the *Abſolution* which he gives after the *General Confeſſion*. The Church hath ordered ſome things to be ſaid after the Miniſter, with great advice. As,

1. The *General Confeſſion*, wherein we ſolemnize that Repentance that gives us admittance into the reconciled ſtate, and makes all our Services acceptable to God. And there is this great advantage in the conjunction of all, with the Voice, as well as the Heart in that thing, That the profeſſion of our Repentance in that manner hath all the circumſtances that may make it ſatisfactory and obliging, at leaſt as far as the Church can provide in the caſe. For here every one doth as it were accuſe, judge, and condemn himſelf before God and the whole Congregation for thoſe ſins contained in the general Heads therein mentioned; the particular inſtances whereof are fit onely to be mentioned in his ſecret Confeſſion to God himſelf: and if he do it ſeriouſly, with a Devotion ſuitable to the Words, it is to me a more ſatisfactory ſign of penitence, than the enlarged Confeſſions in the other Way; wherein ſome, to ſeem fervent, or to make themſelves ſo, run into the enumeration of ſins beyond due meaſures, and beyond what the Congregation can be ſuppoſed (though Chriſtians of a ſort inferiour to themſelves, at leaſt in their own judgment) to be generally conſcious to be guilty in. And this alſo ſhould be a mighty obligation againſt returning to the ſins we have confeſſed: For having as it were called God and Man to witneſs the truth and ſincerity of our Repentance, it will be a high aggravation of our careleſsneſs, if we ſuffer our ſelves eaſily to be drawn to ſin again, either in omitting our Duty, or committing Iniquity in any kind: and therefore it will engage every good man to *watch and pray, leſt he* ſhould *enter into temptation*.

The 2d. is the *Lords Prayer*; which (becauſe it teacheth the formation of the affections and deſires of our Souls in the moſt excellent order, and to the higheſt perfection that is poſſible, and comprehends the heads of whatever is to be ſought at the hands of God with greateſt brevity and plainneſs) is neceſſary to be learned of all, even from their firſt attainment of the uſe of Reaſon and Speech; which the Church cannot better provide for, than by engaging them always to ſay it after the Miniſter; and beſides, it is a declaration of our Chriſtian unity, and a renunciation of all Hereſies and Schiſms, as far

as we know them: And we do the greater honour to God and our blessed Saviour, in repeating that Prayer in the most solemn and triumphant manner; and every one by a great fervency and devotion therein, doth most effectually edifie his Brethren.

The 3d is, the Repetition of the *Creeds*; a thing so useful to implant the brief sum of Christian Doctrine in the memories of all, and to declare our common joy and exultancie in the belief and profession of those truths upon which the hopes of our common Salvation is built, as also to assist the production and growth of the blessed fruits and effects of our Faith, by a daily cherishing the Root by renewed consideration, and solemn profession: I say, a thing, in these respects, besides many other, that may be thought so useful, that all good men must needs commend the wisdom of the Church in ordering it.

This is all, in the daily Service, to which this Discourse chiefly relates: and in these things it is very commendable to say after the Minister. But now, if those that are naturally loquacious, finding a delight in saying what they should, remit the Exercise of their consideration so far, as to say that they should not; here is a fault that ought to be amended; and I am sure on serious thoughts they will freely incline so to do. For they will easily perceive how indecent it is for them to say after the Minister, where he is supposed to speak to them by way of Exhortation or Admonition: that the People should absolve the Priest, as much as the Priest absolves them, is a great absurdity.

'Tis true, in the Conclusion of the *Absolution*, when the Minister speaks to himself as well as the People, as the result of his declaration of Gods pardoning mercy to the penitent, to exhort that we should **beseech him to grant us true Repentance and his Holy Spirit**, &c. we may very profitably joyn with a soft Voice, *Lord grant us true Repentance and thy Holy Spirit, that those things may please thee which we do at this present*, &c. And this will supply a defect which some complain of, *viz.* that there is in our Service no preparatory Prayer: For being now presently to begin the most immediate act of Worship in the words of our blessed Lord, and to joyn with the Heavenly Host in Hallowing Gods Name, and to proceed to all the rest; it is meet that we prepare our selves with this humble desire, that God will assist the sincerity of our Repentance, and bestow on us the grace of his Holy Spirit, that the performance may be well-pleasing to him, and the effect profitable to us; rendring us more pure and holy in the remainder of our lives, and assuring our admittance into his Eternal Joys at the end of them.

2. As

2. As the former custom of saying after the Minister where we should attend and say nothing, seems indecent, so it seems as much, if not more, when the People say before him what they should say after him: and this appears to be a disorder not onely on the forementioned account, but as it is an invading his Ministerial Function, which is to lead and guide the people in all the publick Offices of Religion; and neither to follow their humours in the manner of his Prayers, if he were in other respects to order them as he pleased, or to follow the measure of their Voices, where the words as well as the matter is prescribed; though in both respects, Ministers are fain sometimes to depart from their right. And as I have known in former times many, that used the way of Extemporary Prayer before their Sermon to humor the people, when in their own judgment they much prefer'd the constant use of a well-composed Form: So I know some now, who do read the Prayers very fast, and that beyond what the solemnity of the matter can bear, onely (as I charitably hope) because they see the people so subject to this disorder of running before them; which they know not how to remedy otherwise. I say, besides this, there are other ill effects of this custom, in respect of our selves and others: For it much hinders the devout operation of the mind, which is much assisted by hearing the matter first spoken by the Minister, and fixing on the intent consideration thereof, we speak afterwards with much greater fervency and affection; as every ones experience will witness, that will but try the thing.

And again, those that have so accustomed themselves to speak before the Minister, are at a far greater loss to say a *New Prayer* or *Penitential Psalm*, (which is sometimes ordered on Fasts, &c. to be said with the Minister) than those who are nightly practised in the other way, which makes it easie to say very decently such things after the Minister as we never heard before. For if we attend well unto the main of the Sentence we are to repeat, we shall be able to guess at the Conclusion; so that we need not stay till he hath quite done before we begin, but may come up with him as is most decent, and yet hear so as to say all right: and this would make much for the solemn performance of the Service on extraordinary times, wherein now, for the most part, onely the Minister and Clark are Speakers.

But further, I have heard some that come over from the *Nonconformists* to attend our Prayers, complain of this as the most offensive disorder, and that it tended very much to distract their Devotion, when those that sit by them ramble over the Prayers, and are at the end before the Minister is half way, and I believe it cannot but give

ſome diſturbance to the Miniſter himſelf: I am ſure it hath been no ſmall offence to my ſelf; ſo that I could hardly forbear telling them of it, but that I conſidered that it required more ſedate diſcourſe than that ſeaſon would afford: which was one chief cauſe I engaged in this Scribble; and I hope thoſe who have not conſidered this matter, will be perſwaded, by what I have written, to order themſelves better for the time to come.

The 3d thing is, that the people generally anſwer the Miniſter in the *Reſponſes* and *Pſalmody* with too ſoft a voice; and are ſo little heard, that it ſeems to one that comes into the Church whilſt that Exerciſe is performing, as if the Miniſter read a Verſe, and then ſtopp'd a while and read again, the people being ſo little heard; eſpecially if the Clark be abſent, as he may have often occaſion to be, where Prayers are read every day. This ſeems to me very unſuitable to the nature of that Exerciſe, wherein we are to declare our Joy and Exultancy in God; and therefore in ſpeaking, as well as ſinging, we ſhould lift up our Voices, and praiſe him luſtily and with a good courage, as it is *Pſal.*81.1. And in many places the Scripture exhorts to a great cheerfulneſs in this Exerciſe, and to do it with loud and exalted Voices. And if we did ſo, it would make it ſhew like another thing than it doth in the way I reprove, and would render it more laudatory and honourable to Almighty God, and more pleaſant and comfortable to our ſelves; and would remove the offence that ſome take againſt it as Unedifying, becauſe they cannot underſtand half the *Pſalm*, through the imperfect murmur of the people in repeating it. For if every one ſpake as loud and plain in repeating his Verſe, as the Miniſter doth in repeating his (as they ought to do, if they would have it appear like *Pſalmody*, or an Office of Praiſe) there would be no cauſe for this Complaint by thoſe that could not read themſelves, who might be helped by the next by-ſtander to perform their part without it, or at leaſt underſtand as much as if the Miniſter read all, and be more edified in that holy Joy which this manner of reading is apt to beget.

And I wiſh that people had the art to ſpeak in ſome kind of Concord with the Miniſter, either that their Voices might be Uniſons with his, or a Fifth or an Eighth from it: For there is a *Speaking* as well as *Singing* together, that is very harſh, by reaſon of a diſcordancy in the Voices of thoſe that perform it. And if men that have underſtanding in this matter, and good ſtrong Voices, would ſet themſelves to do their part, it would ſoon bring the Congregation to a better performance. And why ſhould they not think themſelves concerned ſo to do? Is there any Exerciſe in the world of a higher nature,

ture, or more immediately deſign'd to the Glory and Honour of Almighty God? Beſides, it is done as in his ſight and preſence, and therefore to be done with a manly courage, and the beſt skill we are able. And nothing can be more exhilarating to pious minds, than to have communion together in celebrating the Divine Praiſes, in repeating the Hiſtories of his wonderful Works; nor more edifying, in provoking one another to worſhip, fear, and obey him, *ſpeaking to our ſelves, and teaching and admoniſhing one another*, as the Apoſtle exhorts, *in Pſalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, ſinging with grace, and making melody to the Lord in our hearts*, Eph. 5. 19. Coloſ. 3. 16. For the gracious Harmony which we find in our Souls between our Reaſon and the truth of the Divine Revelations, our Affections and the infinite goodneſs and ſuitableneſs of the objects therein propoſed, eſpecially as theſe powers are renewed by the Holy Ghoſt, muſt needs yield an unſpeakable delight to our ſelves; and when we *make melody to the Lord*, by exerciſing the Graces of Faith, and Love, and Joy, and Hope, within us, and ſing to him by expreſſing them to the ſence of others, by the ſolemn, ſerious, and joyful manner of ſpeaking; we *teach and admoniſh one another* by ſuch pleaſant converſation in repeating thoſe excellent parts of Scripture; by this ſweetly inſinuating holy Doctrine, and teaching one another to follow God and his Saints, whoſe vertues and bleſſedneſs we celebrate; and admoniſhing one another to take heed leſt we have any fellowſhip with the wicked whoſe vices we condemn, and remember their woful downfals as our enſamples.

Now this being ſo pleaſant and profitable an Exerciſe, why ſhould not all good men endeavour to renew the credit thereof, by the moſt excellent manner of performance? Certainly it had never been in the power of Satan or his Inſtruments to have brought into contempt this Angelical Exerciſe, if men had not remitted their care in this reſpect. For our praiſing God, and communicating the delights of heaven-born ſouls in this way, is ſo accommodate to the capacity of all, deſcending to the very meaneſt, without abating the delights of the greateſt, that it is ſtrange any ſhould not like it.

I have known ſome Families, that for many Generations have been ſo defective in the way of artificial ſinging, that no one perſon of them could ever ſing the Tune of a Pſalm in any tolerable manner; yet theſe can praiſe God with the Congregation in this way of repeating the Pſalms by turns; and Children may be much earlier taught ſo to do it, than in any other way. And yet it is no abatement of delight to others that are more skilful in Muſick: For the way of Singing which is now moſt commended, is but a melodious kind

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of Speaking; and all Graces that hinder the understanding of the Words, are quite out of fashion. So that here is a delight that offers it self most early to be the felicity of Humane Nature, anticipating the base and bruitish delights of Sense, that press upon us for entertainment on that account, before we can well discover the slightness of their pretences. And also this pleasure loseth not its Relish in Old age, but still continueth its force and power, to counter-work the insinuations of all contrary delights that may be prejudicial to the true spiritual felicity of our minds and spirits.

And I perswade my self, that if persons of age and honour, and those that have some excellency of Art, would but design and endeavour to make the best of this way, they would find great satisfaction to themselves thereby, and also would beget an ambition in the younger sort to do worthily in performing their part of this heavenly *Psalmody*; and being so encouraged, they would soon conceive such a pleasure as I have before spoken of: And this, in conjunction with other appointed means, would mightily facilitate the work of true Conversion, engaging them heartily in the spiritual Combat against the Enemies of their Souls, to which we obliged them by Baptism. For it is so evident that Life without Pleasure is an empty name, and little more desirable than Death, that *David* lamenting in his own person the deplorable miseries to which man in his best state in this world is subject, asks the question, *Wherefore God had made all men for nought?* And yet the Apostle tells of some who *lived in pleasure*, that they were *dead while they lived*. Whence we may conclude, that Man is a Creature capable of two sorts of Pleasure; Mental, and Carnal; and that these do for the most part militate against each other: and if carnal Pleasures prevail, and get the possession of our Life, we are said to be *dead* in respect of our minds and spiritual part: But if the delights of the Mind once take place, and become our employment, then the Body is said to be *dead by reason of sin, as the Spirit is life because of righteousness*. So that it is of mighty avail to cherish these Spiritual pleasures, and depress those that are Carnal, especially in the beginning of our life; as that upon which the happiness of the whole Life depends. And this, I think, may be done by a pious and prudent instruction in the forementioned Duty, and by giving a good example to encourage the performance. I cannot give this matter the explication it requires: but I hope a word to the wise will be sufficient.

Having hinted these things to rectifie what seem'd to me amiss, I shall now briefly represent that Behaviour which I judge most decent

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in the performance of thoſe Sacred Offices. Firſt then, having a due ſenſe of what you are going about, *viz.* to approach the moſt glorious and dreadful preſence of the Almighty; and having compoſed your minds to worſhip him with that Reverence and Devotion you ought, and declared this by the ſolemn manner of your coming into his Houſe, and placing your ſelf in the ſtation wherein you are to perform your part in this holy Exerciſe; you are to fix your eyes on the Reader as the Miniſter of God, the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts, ſent to call you to Repentance, with offers of Peace and Reconciliation, that you may eſcape his dreadful Wrath, which none can endure or withſtand; which all the Hoſt of Heaven and Powers of Hell, as well as all the Creatures here on Earth, are ready to miniſter againſt impenitent and profane wretches. You are to ſtand up and attend ſeriouſly to the reading of thoſe *Scripture-Sentences* wherewith he begins this Service, wherein are declared, in the very words of God himſelf, the neceſſity of Repentance, and the certainty of Pardon and gracious acceptance to all that truly perform it.

You are alſo well to conſider the inforcement of thoſe *Sentences*, by his reading the *Exhortation* following; mean time reflecting on your ſelf with a due remembrance of your particular ſins, that you may be the better prepared to accompany him with a pure Heart and humble Voice in the *General Confeſſion* following. And this Confeſſion (as it is ordered) we ſhould make in the moſt humble poſture, which according to the uſe and cuſtom of this Country, is kneeling on our Knees; which none are to omit, except hindred by bodily infirmity, or ſuch inconveniences as are ſometimes occaſioned by Crowds of people; and then they muſt take care to ſupply that defect by other expreſſions of humble Reverence. And we ought ſo to ſpeak in repeating the ſame after the Miniſter, that we thereby expreſs, that we verily believe our ſelves to be guilty (in many particular inſtances) of ſuch ſins as are confeſſed under the ſeveral Heads therein mentioned, and that we are heartily ſorry for the ſame, and earneſtly implore the divine Mercy and Forbearance, and to be reſtored to his grace and favour, truſting to his Promiſes made to us in Chriſt, and with no leſs earneſtneſs deſire the aſſiſtance of his Grace, to inable us to live better for the future. This faithful endeavour to appear as humble penitents before God and the Congregation, will ſuppreſs the workings of Pride and Self-conceit (the Parent of all vice) and ſtrengthen the contrary Virtue, Humility, the Foundation and Nurſe of all Vertues.

In attending in the ſame poſture while the Miniſter as Gods Herald pronounceth *Abſolution* and pardon of ſins to the truely penitent that unfeignedly believe the Goſpel of his Son, we ought to expreſs

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a great Reverence of the Almighty, from whom he ſpeaks, with the moſt humble Thankfulneſs and holy Joy for his rich Grace communicated to us by the Steward of his Myſteries, whom he hath impowred to diſpence the ſame: Earneſtly begging (according to his exhortation) that our Faith and Repentance may be aſſiſted by the divine Co-operation, that we never fail of the ſame for want of meet diſpoſitions to receive it.

When we have thus prepared our ſelves, we ought, with heavenly Joy and great Fervency, to joyn with the Miniſter and Congregation in repeating that divine Prayer which our Saviour taught. In the beginning of it (which is Euchariſtical, containing ſuch Petitions as are for the immediate honour and glory of God) lifting up our hands and eyes with our voices to Heaven, we declare our Joy in God, and exultancy in his Praiſes. In the reſt (wherein we ſupplicate things neceſſary for our ſelves) we ſhould expreſs greateſt humility, in bowing our Heads and Bodies towards the Earth, as unworthy to ask ſo great things of ſo great a Majeſty, and ſpeaking with more lowly and humble Voices; until returning to the acknowledgment of his paternal Government which inclines him, his Power which enables him, and his Glory which engages him to be ſo good to his Creatures, and eſpecially his Children, we lift up our Hearts and Hands, and with more chearful Voices repeat the *Doxologie*.

After this, being to paſs to that high and heavenly work of praiſing God, the work for which we were chiefly made, and the excellent power of Speech given us; (to which, while we continued innocent, and ſo happy, our mouth was ſtill opened unto; but now, Sin and Sorrow, Guilt and Fear, Cares and Vexations, have even made us dumb to Gods Praiſes;) we ought moſt devoutly to joyn with the Miniſter in the Reſponſe following the Lords Prayer, **Lord open thou our Mouths, And our Lips ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe,** &c. And while we ſeek his Grace, we ſhould uſe our own endeavours to open our own Mouths, and lift up our Voices while we ſing his Praiſes.

The *Gloria Patri* follows; at the repetition whereof, we are required to ſtand up, that the exaltation of our Body may teach us to lift up our Hearts. And ſo fitly do theſe words of *Glory* ſerve to the Adoration of the Diety, according to the Faith which the Chriſtian Religion requires us to have thereof, that the man that doth not endeavour, by the manner of pronouncing them, and by his deportment of Body, to expreſs the inward reverence and adoration of his mind, gives ſuſpition of a great defect in his Chriſtianity.

Being next to proceed to praiſe God by the repetition of the

Pſalms

Pſalms of *David*, &c. the Miniſter (that he may mind us that it is not the ordinary reading thoſe parts of Scripture for inſtruction, but the repeating them as an Exerciſe of Praiſe and Worſhip to Almighty God) is ordered to ſay, **Praiſe ye the Lord**; and the People to anſwer, **The Lords Name be praiſed.** In hearing and ſaying ſuch words, we muſt excite and expreſs holy deſires, that we may ſo perform this Exerciſe, as may tend moſt abundantly to the Glory and Honour of Almighty God.

The Pſalm with which we always begin at Morning-prayer, is, **O come, let us ſing unto the Lord**; and is moſt fitly choſen, for mutual provocation to this heavenly Exerciſe, and alſo for inſtruction in the reaſons thereof, and withal to peſwade to the obedience that ſhould be conſequent thereunto; ſhewing the dreadful danger of not attending to the ſame: and therefore requires that we be ſerious and intent in performing it.

As for the *repetition of the Pſalms in courſe* that follows, I have hinted what is needful before: onely let me remember, that none ſhould take liberty to ſit in that performance, except conſtrained by bodily infirmity; becauſe ſtanding is ſo much more fit a poſture for the Office of Thankſgiving; and ſitting was counted ſo indecent in the Primitive times, that the whole Service was called *Station*; and is onely indulged now for bodily weakneſs; and not order'd, becauſe of the great decay of Piety, which will not bear ſuch ſtrictneſs.

After the Pſalms, a *Chapter* is read out of the *Old Teſtament*, that we may be inſtructed in the Doctrine of the Creation and Government of the firſt World, its Deſtruction and Reſtitution, the promiſes of the Meſſia, and procedure of Gods Grace in preparing men for himſelf; as alſo the correſpondency of our Saviours Doctrine to that which God of old delivered by his Prophets; his agreement to the Types and Figures of him under the Law, and the accompliſhment of what *Moſes* and the Prophets wrote, in that which he was, did, and ſuffered: in ſuch, and many other reſpects, the reading thereof is profitable; and therefore all Talking, Gazing, and careleſs behaviour (too often ſeen at this time) ſhould be avoided, and we ſhould appear as diligent Auditors to thoſe Divine Oracles.

The inſtruction and reſpit we have hereby had, ſhould cauſe us to return with greater joy and cheerfulneſs to our heavenly work of Praiſing God. For which we have next prepared the Evangelical Hymn *Te Deum*; the moſt excellent that ever was compoſed by man, and ſpeaks as much of divine Inſpiration as any thing (not acknowledged for ſuch) ever did; ſo fitted for divine Adoration, and apt to excite Devotion, and to miniſter moſt abundantly to the Conſolation

of good Christians, that even that alone (methinks) should draw us to Church, if not witheld by great Obligations. I do therefore most earnestly recommend to you the most solemn appearance, and the most devout acts of Worship, and the most plain, joyful, and reverent manner of speaking, and what ever you can think becomes the repetition of those excellent words.

The adoration of our God and our Saviour by the foresaid Exercise, cannot but dispose us to hear the Doctrine of the *New Testament*, out of which a *Chapter* is next read; which, reporting to us either the wonderful History of Christ and his Apostles, or their holy and incomparable Doctrine, cannot be too diligently and reverently attended to: And I should think those who have strength of body would do very commendably in standing up at the reading thereof.

Then we are ordered to return again to the work of *Praising* God; which nothing but Carnality can ever be weary of. And the *Psalms* here appointed, are such as minister most fitly to the Joy conceived by hearing the glad tidings of the Gospel sent to the *Gentiles* (of which we were) as well as to the *Jews*; and therefore to shew that we have not *received that Grace in vain*, nor heard the Gospel of it without diligent heed, we should repeat that *Psalm* devoutly and joyfully.

The next that follows is the *Creed*, which contains those matters in which all Christians are of one mind, (which do *believe with their hearts to Righteousness*) and of which all Christians must make publick Profession, that will *Confess with their mouths to Salvation*. We therefore, in one posture (and with all our Faces one way it should be) do with one mouth repeat that excellent *Form of sound words*; which so excellently ministers to the stedfastness of our Faith, our rejoycing in Hope, our unity in Love, and cheerfulness in the Praises of God and our Saviour, that no man that considers it, could chuse but stand up and bear his part with us; and he that finds no joy and elevation of mind in repeating the *Creed*, hath nothing else but a natural Joy in hearing the most excellent Sermon, or ravishing Prayer: For they can have no *Matter* more transporting; and if it be onely the words or passion of the Speaker that affects us, 'tis no spiritual delight. Let those therefore take heed, that regard not to honour God, and express the joy of their Faith, by a due performance in this matter.

After this, we return to the solemn duty of *Prayer*; which that we may perform with mutual Charity, and great Devotion, the Minister salutes the people with that excellent Option, **The Lord be with**

with you: and they return, **And with thy Spirit.** Which words ſpoken with the holy affection they ought, are apt to beget ſuch a diſpoſition of mind, as will render the Prayers very acceptable to God, and edifying to one another. The Miniſter yet farther (to awaken all the powers of our Souls to this moſt ſerious buſineſs) is to ſay, **Let us pray:** which therefore we ſhould compoſe our ſelves to do with all our might.

The *Reſponſe* wherewith we begin, **Lord have mercy, Chriſt have mercy, Lord have mercy,** ſerves moſt fitly to aſſiſt this endeavour of great fervency; and being repeated without it, ſeems very indecent, and a kind of *vain Repetition*: therefore remember this.

Then we renew the Repetition of the *Lords Prayer*; which Prayer certainly is of that excellency, that no Chriſtian ſhould think it too much to uſe it both in the beginning and end of this Service. And indeed this is the very ſum and ſubſtance of all our Prayers; and others are added onely for greater ſolemnity, and fuller explication: And therefore the oftener it is repeated, the more devoutly it ſhould be ſaid, and greater fervency excited.

To relax a little this great intention of mind, we have ordered a moſt excellent *Reſponſe*, wherein the Miniſter and People exchange ſome devout Ejaculations, for themſelves, for their Superiours, and Brethren: which as they mix ſomewhat of holy delight with fervency, ſo they greatly ſtrengthen the bands of Chriſtian Unity.

The reſt of the time we ſpend in repeating ſeveral *Collects*, moſt excellent for the matter, and comprehenſive for the words; in praying for the King and Royal Family, for Magiſtrates and Miniſters, the Church and State, all Chriſtians, and all Men; and we give ſolemn thanks for Gods Mercies to us and them: in all which we ſhould ſtrive to preſerve a conſtant intention, and true devotion of mind: and if to that end we accompany the Miniſter with our Voice, it ſhould be always with ſuch caution as I have expreſſed before; and ſo it may be very uſeful to that end.

But in the whole performance, I earneſtly admoniſh all men to avoid ſitting, lolling, leaning, and all indecent poſtures; and to continue Kneeling meekly and devoutly, if their ſtrength permit; if not, that in whatever poſture they are neceſſitated to be, they make ſuch expreſſions of Serioufneſs and Devotion as is meet. And certainly I may appeal to men themſelves in this Caſe, as the Apoſtle in another matter of indecency in Gods Worſhip: *Judge in your ſelves what is meet.* Can any man think it fit to ſupplicate the infinite Majeſty of Heaven and Earth in any but the moſt humble poſture of body, which with us is Kneeling; or that we ought to ſit

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on our Breeches when we ſing or ſpeak praiſe unto him? Certainly the power of Errour is very great, that it can blind the mind of man in a matter ſo evident and plain. But I truſt that thoſe to whom I write are not ſo deceived.

I have now run over the daily Office of *Morning-Prayers*; and ſhall proceed no farther, becauſe he that will obſerve what I have written in that, cannot be to ſeek in ordering himſelf aright in all the reſt.

POSTSCRIPT.

ONe thing I have thought fit to add, as uſeful to the deſign of this Paper, which is, My humble Requeſt to Miniſters and Veſtries, that they will take care that fit and worthy perſons be put into the Office of Pariſh-Clerks; for that the defects of the people in performing their part of this Service, is chiefly imputable to this cauſe, that they have not a Clerk that is able to lead them in the right way of that performance: for if the people would but conſider, that it is the ſpecial work of a Clerk to be their guide in what they are to ſay and do in this Service, and make ſuch obſervation of him as they ought, he ſtanding ſo advantageouſly for the ſame, would bring the whole Congregation unto a good performance. Some perſons that may offer themſelves, and it may be the Pariſhes intereſt to chuſe, may have ſuch natural defects, that they can never be made fit for the place; and ſome are of ſuch a profane ſpirit, that they will never ſet themſelves to ſtudy to do their beſt therein. Both theſe are to be rejected, whatever advantages the Pariſh may make by their election: for ſo ſacred a thing as the Worſhip and Service of Almighty God, is not to be ſubjugated to the ſecular intereſts of men: And it is a great reproach to any Pariſh, that to ſave themſelves a little charge in maintaining a poor Family, they ſhould employ a perſon to be guide to the people in this moſt ſolemn Office of divine Worſhip, that is any way a ſcandal or diſhonour thereunto, or unfit to perform it as he ought. And if any ſuch be already in the place, my requeſt is, that the Miniſter and Veſtry will uſe their authority to reform them, and engage them to ſtudy the moſt decent and graceful manner of performance; and if that cannot be effected, to force them to admit the help of another in that matter, though they may continue to do the Pariſh-buſineſs in other reſpects. I make this humble requeſt, becauſe I believe that a Clerk that was a devout man, and one that had a good command of his Voice, if he would ſet himſelf to ſtudy to excel in performing what is required of him, would greatly aſſiſt the people in the well performance of their part, and excite them thereunto.

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